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No. 1848/66

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
Directorate of Intelligence
23 November 1966

INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM

Situation in Jordan
(As of 1:00 PM EST)

25X1X 1. Anti-Husayn demonstrations, some calling openly for the King's overthrow, broke out today in every major center in Palestinian west Jordan, including Jerusalem. Policemen there had to use tear gas in controlling some 250 students and adults, but sporadic demonstrations are continuing. In Nablus, which has been the center of most of the trouble, rioting also continues. A curfew is in effect and travel into and out of the city is restricted. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] has described the overall situation as "very grave." Police and troops still appear to be responding to orders. 25X1X

25X1X 2. [REDACTED] has informed the US Embassy that stronger and even more violent demonstrations reportedly are planned for tomorrow, and that it is very probable that martial law will have to be established then throughout west Jordan. If matters get worse, he said, martial law may even be imposed today. He was not certain that even martial law would enable the government to restore order and chart a reasonable course of action.

3. A Defense Attache [REDACTED] believes the limit the army can be used to repress demonstrations has almost been reached, and that such use of the army only serves to intensify military demands for Jordanian retaliation against Israel. The mood in Amman may, in fact, 25X1C

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be reaching the point where Husayn will be unable and unwilling further to resist the pressure for some sort of riposte, even though it might be suicidal.

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5. The Egyptian-oriented Palestine Liberation Organization continues to lead the propaganda barrage against Husayn, augmented by similar outpourings from Egyptian and Syrian media. Official Egyptian commentary on the situation has not yet been heard, but Nasir is scheduled to make a speech on 25 November during which he could hardly avoid some statement.

6. The USSR so far is treating the crisis with caution. Soviet propaganda has been relatively muted, although Moscow has made clear it considers Israel--backed by the US--is responsible for the tension. The US Embassy in Moscow notes that the Soviet press also seems to be telling the USSR's friends in the Middle East to take it easy on Jordan, citing alleged "decisive support" for Jordan from the majority of Arabs. The Soviets have probably noted the anti-Husayn outpourings from Cairo and Damascus, which they apparently consider unhelpful in the present situation.

7. Attached is a list of the new arms Jordan is asking from the US.

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